approved for preparation of DPR under NHDP Phase-III B. Construction of these bridges would depend upon the outcome of the DPR.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Package for road widening

237. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have approved Rs. 22,750 crore package for converting 6,500 km of four laning of highways into six laning;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have put any time-frame for this project;

(d) whether this project would be executed under the new model concession agreement under public private partnership; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (e) It is proposed to widen 6500 km of National Highways to six-lanes on Build Operate and Transfer Basis under National Highway Development Project (Phase-V). It will include the entire length of 5846 km. of Golden Quadrilateral and some other stretches to be selected. The details are under discussion with the Planning Commission. As such, it is too early to give the details.

Length of national waterways

238. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total length of national waterways under use as of now in the country;

(b) the steps taken to increase the coverage of national waterway; and

(c) whether Government would take up Buckingham Canal and develop it for waterways transportation?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The total length of existing three National Waterways is 2716 km.

(b) Techno-economic feasibility studies of other waterways have been conducted and the following inland waterways are proposed for declaration as National Waterways.

(i) Kakinada-Pondicherry Canal along with rivers Godavari and Krishna (1095 km)

(ii) East Coast Canal along with river Brahmani and Mahanadi Delta (623 km)

(iii) River Barak in Assam (140 km)

(c) Buckingham Canal is included in the declaration proposal at b (i) above. After declaration as a National Waterway, infrastructure development works will be taken upon the entire stretch.

Four-Laning of National Highways

239. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Highway Authority of India has signed some agreements for four-laning of nearly 200 kms. of highways on BOT basis Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the expenditure involved in this project; and

(d) by when the work on the project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (d) The details of civil work contract agreement signed by the National Highways